

locations of the mail contents while they are being generated. In the preferred embodiment, each mail content is placed in a window envelope such that the postage indicium on the mail content exposes through a window of the envelope to facilitate inspection of the indicium. In accordance with another aspect of the invention, by including transactional data in addition to the traditional postal data in a postage indicium, the indicium can be used to pay bills, purchase products and services, including any courier service different than the postal service. --

The abstract is included herein on a separate sheet.

In the Claims

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

Cancel Claims 1-7, 29, 30, 82-106, 107-112, 132, 133 and 184-191.

Amend Claim 8:

1 8. (Twice Amended) Apparatus for generating a content of a mail piece, said
2 mail piece including a cover for enclosing said content, said apparatus comprising:
3 an input for receiving data representative of at least said content, said data excluding a
4 value of cost of delivery of said mail piece,
5 a processor for computing the cost of delivery of said mail piece based on said data; and
6 an output for generating said content based on said data, and applying,
7 contemporaneously, at least an indicator indicative of the computed cost onto said content at a
8 selected location thereof.

Amend Claim 26:

1 1 / 26. (Twice Amended) Apparatus for processing a mail piece for which postage
2 needs to be dispensed before delivery of the mail piece, comprising:

3 an interface for obtaining, from the mail piece, selected information appearing on the
 4 mailing piece, said information including data identifying an originator of said mail piece; and
 5 a processor responsive to at least the selected information for determining whether to
 6 dispense the postage, wherein said processor disallows a dispensation of the postage when said
 7 originator is determined to be unauthorized to expend the postage.

Amend Claim 31:

1 4 ~~31~~. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [29] 26 wherein the originator is an
 2 individual.

[Amend Claim 32:]

1 5 ~~32~~. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [29] 26 wherein the originator is an
 2 organization.

Amend Claim 36:

1 9 ~~36~~. (Amended) [Postage] An indicium dispensing apparatus comprising;
 2 sub C a processor for creating [a postage] an indicium, said [postage] indicium including a
 3 proof of payment, for service by a first party, and transactional data comprising at least
 4 information representative of a transaction amount, said first party causing said transaction
 5 amount to be paid to a second party in response to at least said transactional data when said first
 6 party processes said [postage] indicium; and
 7 an output for generating said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 38:

A7 SUB 1 11 38. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 36⁹ wherein said transactional data includes information concerning an originator of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 46:

A8 SUB 1 13 46. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 36⁹ wherein said [postage] indicium includes a digital signature for authenticating at least part of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 48:

A9 SUB 1 29 48. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 36⁹ wherein said [postage] indicium includes a human readable portion.

Amend Claim 51:

A10 SUB 1 15 51. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 36⁹ wherein said [postage] indicium includes a machine readable portion.

Amend Claim 53:

A11 1 17 53. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [52] 36⁹ wherein said [second] first party is
2 a courier other than [the] a postal authority.

Amend Claim 55:

A12 SUB 1 24 55. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 36⁹ wherein said [postage] indicium is generated onto a tangible medium.

[Amend Claim 56:]

1 ²⁵56. (Amended) The apparatus of claim ²⁴56 wherein said tangible medium is [paper]
2 a label.

[Amend Claim 57:]

1 ¹⁹57. (Amended) The apparatus of claim ⁹36 wherein said [postage] indicium is
2 generated onto a mail piece.

[Amend Claim 58:]

1 ³³58. (Amended) [Postage] An indicium processing apparatus comprising:
2 a processor for processing at least one [postage] indicium including a proof of payment,
3 for service by a first party, and transactional data comprising at least information representative
4 of a transaction amount; and
5 an output responsive to at least said transactional data for causing said transaction amount
6 to be paid to a second party when the [postage] indicium is processed.

[Amend Claim 59:]

1 ⁴⁵59. (Amended) The apparatus of claim ³³58 wherein said [postage] indicium appears
2 on a mail piece.

Amend Claim 61:

1 ³⁴61. (Amended) The apparatus of claim ³³58 wherein said processor includes a
2 scanner for scanning at least part of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 63:

A14
1 sub 36 63. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 58³³ wherein said transactional data includes
2 C10 information concerning an originator of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 71:

A15
1 sub 39 71. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 58³³ wherein said [postage] indicium
2 C10 includes a digital signature for authenticating at least part of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 73:

A16
1 sub 56 73. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 58³³ wherein said [postage] indicium
2 C11 includes a human readable portion.

Amend Claim 76:

A17
1 sub 92 76. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 58³³ wherein said [postage] indicium
2 C12 includes a machine readable portion

Amend Claim 78:

A18
1 49 78. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [77] 58³³ wherein said [second] first party is
2 a courier other than [the] a postal authority.

Amend Claim 113:

A19
1 113. (Twice Amended) A method for generating a content of a mail piece, said
2 mail piece including a cover for enclosing said content, said method comprising the steps of:

3 receiving data representative of at least said content, said data excluding a value of cost
 4 of delivery of said mail piece;
 5 computing the cost of delivery of said mail piece based on said data;
 6 generating said content based on said data; and
 7 applying, contemporaneously, at least an indicator indicative of the computed cost onto
 8 said content at a selected location thereof.

Amend Claim 130:

1 ⁵⁹130. (Twice Amended) A method for processing a mail piece for which postage
 2 needs to be dispensed before delivery of the mail piece, comprising the steps of:
 3 obtaining from the mail piece selected information appearing on the mail [mailing] piece,
 4 wherein the selected information includes data identifying an originator of said mail piece; and
 5 determining whether to dispense the postage in response to at least the selected
 6 information, wherein a dispensation of the postage is disallowed when said originator is
 7 determined to be unauthorized to expend the postage.

Amend Claim 134:

1 ⁶¹134. (Amended) The method of claim [132] ⁵⁹130 wherein the originator is an
 2 individual.

Amend Claim 135:

1 ⁶²135. (Amended) The method of claim [132] ⁵⁹130 wherein the originator is an
 2 organization.

Amend Claim 139:

1 ⁶⁶139. (Amended) A method for dispensing [postage] payments comprising the steps
 2 of:
 3 creating [a postage] an indicium, said [postage] indicium including, a proof of payment
 4 for service, by a first party, and transactional data comprising at least information representative
 5 of a transaction amount, said first party causing said transaction amount to be paid to a second
 6 party in response to at least said transactional data when said first party processes said [postage]
 7 indicium; and
 8 generating said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 141:

1 ⁶⁶141. (Amended) The method of claim ⁶⁶139 wherein said transactional data includes
 2 information concerning an originator of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 149:

1 ⁶⁶149. (Amended) The method of claim ⁶⁶139 wherein said [postage] indicium includes
 2 a digital signature for authenticating at least part of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 151:

1 ⁶⁶151. (Amended) The method of claim ⁶⁶139 wherein said [postage] indicium includes
 2 a human readable portion.

Amend Claim 154:

126 1 71 154. (Amended) The method of claim [151] ~~139~~⁶⁶ wherein said [postage] indicium includes a machine readable portion.

Amend Claim 156:

127 1 73 156. (Amended) The method of claim [155] ~~139~~⁶⁶ wherein said [second] first party is
2 a courier other than [the] a postal authority.

Amend Claim 158:

128 1 81 158. (Amended) The method of claim ~~139~~⁶⁶ wherein said [postage] indicium is generated onto a tangible medium.

Amend Claim 160:

1 75 160. (Amended) The method of claim ~~139~~⁶⁶ wherein said [postage] indicium is
2 generated onto a mail piece.

129 [Amend Claim 161:]
SUB 89 161. (Amended)

A postage processing method comprising the steps of:
processing at least one [postage] indicium including a proof of payment, for service by a
3 first party, and transactional data comprising at least information representative of a transaction
4 amount; and
5 causing, in response to at least said transactional data, said transaction amount to be paid
6 to a second party when the [postage] indicium is processed.

Amend Claim 162:

A 29
SUB
19
2 *99* 162. (Amended) The method of claim *89* 161 wherein said [postage] indicium appears on a man piece.

Amend Claim 165:

A 30
SUB
2 *91* 165. (Amended) The method of claim *89* 161 wherein said transactional data includes information concerning an originator of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 173:

A 31
SUB
2 *92* 173. (Amended) The method of claim *89* 161 wherein said [postage] indicium includes a digital signature for authenticating at least part of said [postage] indicium.

Amend Claim 175:

A 32
SUB
2 *110* 175. (Amended) The method of claim *89* 161 wherein said [postage] indicium includes a human readable portion.

Amend Claim 178:

A 33
SUB
2 *94* 178. (Amended) The method of claim *89* 161 wherein said [postage] indicium includes a machine readable portion.

Amend Claim 180:

A 34
1 *96* 180. (Amended) The method of claim [179] *89* 161 wherein said [second] first party is
2 a courier other than [the] a postal authority.

Amend Claim 192:

1 ¹¹³192. (Amended) A method for sending a mail piece comprising [the steps of]:
 2 indicating on the mail piece information concerning a content in the mail piece; and
 3 providing on the mail piece an indicator [for affirming that the content is included in the
 4 mail piece], said indicator causing a processor of the mail piece to inform a third party of the
 5 information while the mail piece is being sent.

Amend Claim 198:

1 ¹²¹198. (Amended) The method of claim ¹¹³192 wherein the information is incorporated
 2 in [a postage] an indicium.

Add Claim 199:

¹²²-- 199. (New) The method of claim ¹²¹198 wherein the indicium includes a postage
 amount. --.

Add Claim 200:

¹¹⁹--200. (New) The method of claim ¹¹³192 wherein the indicator affirms that the
 content is included in the mail piece.--.

Add Claim 201:

²⁰--201. (New) The apparatus of claim ⁹36 wherein the indicium includes a postage
 amount.--.

[Add Claim 202:]

⁴⁴
-- 202. (New)

amount.--.

³³
The apparatus of claim ~~58~~ wherein the indicium includes a postage

[Add Claim 203:]

⁷⁶
-- 203. (New)

amount.--.

⁶⁴
The method of claim ~~139~~ wherein the indicium includes a postage

[Add Claim 204:]

⁹⁸
-- 204. (New)

amount.--.

⁸⁹
The method of claim ~~161~~ wherein the indicium includes a postage

[Add Claim 205:]

¹²³
-- 205. (New)

amount.--.

¹²¹
The method of claim ~~198~~ wherein the indicium includes a postage

[Add Claim 206:]

-- 206. (New)

The apparatus of claim 8 further comprising a generator for generating the indicator indicative of the computed cost onto the cover.--.

[Add Claim 207:]

-- 207. (New)

The method of claim 113 further comprising the step of generating the indicator onto the cover. --.

[Add Claim 208:]

²¹
- 208. (New)

The apparatus of claim ⁹~~36~~ wherein said second party is a utility
company.--

A37
[Add Claim 209:]

⁵⁰
- 209. (New)

The apparatus of claim ⁴⁹~~78~~ wherein said second party is a utility
company.--

[Add Claim 210:]

¹²⁰
- 210 (New)

The method of claim ¹¹³~~192~~ wherein said third party is a utility
company.--